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Probe of CIA Could Prove Useful

Reportedly, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee is considering an investigation of the Central Intelligence Agency's impact on foreign policy.

Such an investigation, if conducted with proper attention to security safeguards, could prove highly beneficial.

The role of the CIA has never been clarified too well in the minds of many Americans. Its appropriations hidden among other departmental requests, its agents, of necessity, faceless except when engaged in the most routine information-gathering tests, the CIA has become a legend — and a somewhat muddy-colored one at that.

About all that is known for certain is that the CIA, through its director, is answerable to the President. The White House and the CIA have said

repeatedly that the CIA does not formulate policy but executes it under direction of the President.

Hopefully, this is the full and literal truth.

The secrecy which cloaks CIA activities, however, makes it impossible for most members of Congress and virtually all of the American people to know whether the organizational ideal is being put into practice on a day-to-day basis.

The Constitution gives the Senate the power and the responsibility, jointly with the President, to conduct the nation's foreign affairs. It is, therefore, fitting that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee should seek to determine the impact of the CIA in this area.

Let the probe begin.